College of Education: Dispositions Continuum for Teaching & Learning Tool

These professional dispositions have been selected by the MSU-Billings College of Education to support effective teaching and learning. This tool features eight dispositions of professional attitudes, values, and understandings demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors. Educational research provides evidence that these dispositions support teaching and learning in classrooms and school communities. Each disposition is comprised of several components which are found in the following pages. For each component, descriptors are provided which range from the unacceptable to professional level. This tool is to be used by College of Education faculty and other individuals, such as P-12 personnel, College of Education staff, or university supervisors—anyone who works with MSUB teacher candidates. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for reflection and dialogue concerning the teacher candidates' dispositional development. It is intended to support teacher candidates in their trajectory toward becoming effective educators. Please note that the dispositions exist on a continuum, and it is common to demonstrate strength in one disposition while working toward growth in another. It is equally common to demonstrate strength in one component of a disposition while working toward growth in another component of the same disposition. Teacher candidates should use this tool to guide their self-reflection and growth. This tool is a critical assessment for the MSUB College of Education Educator preparation program (EPP), and will be used to provide evidence of program effectiveness. It is also a tool for teacher candidates to use as a method of tracking and documenting their own growth across dispositions, with support from the MSUB EPP faculty and its associates.

NOTE: If red flag behaviors or attitudes are observed, immediate action will be taken by the MSUB College of Education faculty and/or P-12 personnel.

Interpretation of Continuum:

Unacceptable: Describes attitudes, values, and understandings of a learner who has achieved little growth and proficiency in the components discussed below, and who possesses some attributes which are inappropriate or ineffective for supporting P-12 learners.

Developing: Describes attitudes, values, and understandings of someone who demonstrates growth in the components discussed below, and who is expected to continue improving in those components.

Proficient: Describe attitudes, values, and understandings of a beginning first-year teacher; this is the hope for someone about to graduate from the program.

Professional: Describes attitudes, values, and understandings of a leader or role model. These are aspirational attributes for first-year teachers. It is not expected that teacher candidates will achieve this level; in fact, these attributes are more likely to be visible after completion of two years of inservice teaching.

Red flags: These attitudes, values, and understandings are not on the continuum of developing in a specific disposition. Instead, they are attributes that need immediate attention.

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Candidate Name:	Candidate ID Number:	Evaluator Name:	☐ University Supervisor ☐ Cooperating Teacher ☐ Candidate
Date of Observation:	Time of Observation:	Observation Number:	☐ Junior Field ☐ Graduate Practicum ☐ Student Teaching
Content Area:	School:	Grade Level:	

1. BELIEF IN POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH: Candidates hold high expectations and emphasize strengths.
Candidates understand that students, families, colleagues, and they, themselves, all have the potential to develop emotionally, socially, and intellectually. Candidates communicate high expectations for their own and their students' performance, and foster growth by emphasizing strengths rather than deficits.

Red flags: *Misses chances to extend student thinking; Promotes a deficit view of students, self, or others; Fails to acknowledge or unaware of level of effort; Fails to foster growth*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
1a: Set high expectations for success	Struggles to set expectations for success for students	Sets mixed expectations for success for students	Consistently sets high expectations for success for themselves and students	Models high expectations for success for themselves, their students, families, and their colleagues, and encourages others to do the same	
1b: Emphasized strengths and ability to grow	Verbal and nonverbal expression that students have limited capacity and potential for growth	Inconsistently expresses that students have the ability to grow	Consistently fosters growth by emphasizing strengths and expresses that all students have the ability to grow	Actively engages students in growth mindset framework	

Evidence:	**Thinking about Next Steps:**

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2. RESPECT FOR DIFFERENCE: Candidates embrace differences and model respect in their communities.
Candidates recognize the broad range of backgrounds, abilities, and experiences that shape others' approaches to learning, and use that understanding to create opportunities. They can effectively and respectfully respond to people of all cultures, languages, class, race, ethnicities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, and gender in a manner that affirms and protects the dignity of every individual. These attributes are visible inside and outside of the classroom.

Red flags: *Conveys disrespect for others' views, opinions, or responsibilities; Uses judgmental language that conveys disrespect for individuals*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
2a: Embraces and understand differences	Demonstrates basic awareness of differences among students, their communities, and/or cultures	Demonstrates sensitivity to and seeks to fully understand unique characteristics of students, their communities, and/or cultures	Embraces and understands differences, shows respect and sensitivity to students and colleagues, their communities, and/or cultures	Models respect and advocates for equitable treatment and expression of diverse perspectives among students, colleagues, families, communities, cultures, languages, and identities	
2b: Uses understanding to create opportunities with students	Hesitant to incorporate this understanding into experiences with students	Misses opportunities to incorporate this understanding into experiences with students	Uses this understanding to create opportunities for experiences with students	Viewed as a leader for implementing a variety of culturally responsive opportunities and resources inside and outside of the classroom	
2c: Engages in discussion about diverse population of learners	Hesitant to engage in discussions with colleagues about diverse populations of learners	Selectively engages in discussions with colleagues about diverse populations of learners	Engages in discussions with colleagues about diverse populations of learners	Fosters a safe environment with students and colleagues to discuss diverse populations of learners	

Evidence:	**Next Steps/Suggestions:**

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3. HUMILITY: Candidates strive to learn from others.
Candidates understand that they have as much to learn as they have to teach and understand that learning is an interactive process. They approach their work with a spirit of openness and collaboration, recognizing that the best solutions to problems involve the participation and collaboration of multiple stakeholders. Because candidates fundamentally respect that parents, students, and colleagues are the authors of their own lives, they strive to understand each person's unique story by listening and observing with the thoughtful engagement of a learner.

Red flags: *Does not listen to what others are saying; Communicates indifference to colleagues', parents', and students' interests, thoughts and beliefs*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
3a: Engages with others to collaborate and solve problems	Hesitant to engage with others to collaborate and solve problems	Infrequently engages with others to collaborate and solve problems	Engages with others to collaborate and solve problems	Thoughtfully engages with others to collaborate and solve problems	
3b: Actively participates in conversation, understands reciprocal process of teaching and learning from one another	Hesitant to participate in conversation or listen to students and school community with an understanding that it supports development as a teacher	Misses opportunities to participate in conversation and listen to students and school community with an understanding that it supports development as a teacher	Actively participates in conversation and listens to students and school community, understanding the reciprocal process of teaching and learning from one another	Proactively seeks out and starts conversations and listens to students and school community, understanding the reciprocal process of teaching and learning from one another	

Evidence:	**Next Steps/Suggestions:**

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4. PERSISTENCE: Candidates demonstrate resilience in the face of challenges.
Successful professionals find ways to adapt to unexpected changes or challenges in the classroom and school community. Candidates are committed to promoting high standards of learning for their students and others, even when conditions are not optimal.

Red flags: *Unable to initiate and/or implement different approaches to address challenges*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
4a: Consistently adapts to unexpected changes or challenges	Hesitant to adapt to unexpected changes or challenges in the classroom and school community	Inconsistently adapts to unexpected changes or challenges in the classroom and school community	Consistently adapts to unexpected changes or challenges in the classroom and school community	Demonstrates flexibility and consistently adapts to unexpected changes or challenges in the classroom and school community	
4b: Plans a variety of resources and techniques	Challenged to find ways to carry out activities and projects in difficult situations	Improvises ways to carry out activities and projects in difficult situations	Plans a variety of resources and techniques to carry out activities and projects in difficult situations	Viewed as a leader for implementing a variety of resources and techniques to carry out activities and projects in difficult situations	

Evidence:	**Next Steps/Suggestions:**

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5. SELF-AWARENESS: Candidates reflect and examine their own perceptions and behaviors on others.
Candidates understand that they learn best when engaging in introspection and reflection. They examine their relationships and interactions with students, families, and colleagues with the goal of continually improving their practice. Their self-examination includes an understanding of how their perceptions, beliefs, and verbal and non-verbal behaviors impact the classroom, school, and community.

Red flags: *Unaware of how behaviors and perceptions affect others*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
5a: Awareness of effect of own behaviors on others	Not aware that thoughts and feelings of oneself may differ than those of others	Able to verbalize thoughts and feelings and has basic awareness of effect of self on others	Able to engage in introspection and express thoughts and feelings about awareness of effect of own behaviors on students	Able to engage in introspection and express thoughts and feelings about awareness of effect of own behaviors on students, families, and colleague	
5b: Demonstrate ability to imagine and verbalize internal state of others	Inconsistently demonstrates ability to imagine and verbalize internal state of others (thoughts and feelings)	Demonstrates ability to imagine and verbalize internal state of others (thoughts and feelings)	Demonstrates ability to imagine and verbalize internal state of others (thoughts and feelings) and understand how they are affecting students and the learning environment	Demonstrates ability to imagine and verbalize internal state of others (thoughts and feelings) and understand how they affect the classroom, school, and community	

Evidence:	**Next Steps/Suggestions:**

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6. REFLECTION: Candidates take responsibility to reflect and incorporate feedback.
Candidates understand the importance of feedback in teaching and learning. They engage in the process of reflection and incorporate constructive feedback with the goal of continually improving their practice.

Red flags: *Makes no effort to incorporate feedback into plans; Repeatedly makes the same major mistakes previously identified; Frustrates with lack of implementation*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
6a: Engages in reflection and acts to improve practice	Unable to reflect upon one's own practice, may exhibit defensive behavior	Engages in reflection upon one's practice and inconsistently acts on those reflections	Engages in reflection and acts to improve practice	Engages in daily reflection and acts to improve practice, recognizes sub-optimal practice as an opportunity for learning and self-improvement	
6b: Solicits feedback with intentional focus	Misses opportunities to seek feedback	Seeks selective feedback that may not address or is misaligned to the priority at the given time	Solicits constructive feedback with intentional focus for areas of improvement	Supports others to reflect and incorporate constructive feedback	
6c: Consistently adjusts practice to incorporate feedback	Temporarily or superficially adjusts practice based on feedback	Occasionally adjusts practice to incorporate feedback	Continually adjusts practice to incorporate feedback	Able to reconcile dissimilar or conflicting feedback and adjust practice continually	

Evidence:	**Next Steps/Suggestions:**

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7. HONESTY AND ETHICS: Candidates exhibit integrity and behave ethically.
Candidates exhibit honesty, upholding high standards of trust, character, and integrity. They are able to adhere to policies and procedures ethically and responsibly in response to dilemmas that arise.

Red flags: *Is indiscreet in sharing information about students and teachers; Conveys false or incomplete information to students and colleagues*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
7a: Maintains a high standard for integrity	Attempts to interact with students and colleagues in an honest and truthful manner, may need reminders to maintain confidentiality	Communicates in an honest and forthright manner with others, speaks truthfully, usually maintains confidentiality	Maintains a high standard of integrity, saying what you mean and meaning what you say, maintains confidentiality	Models a high standard of integrity through words and actions, consistently maintains confidentiality	
7b: Consistently adheres to ethical responsibilities, policies, procedures	Demonstrates basic understanding of ethical responsibilities, may need reminders to follow policies and procedures	Aware and adheres to ethical responsibilities, policies and procedures (does not intentionally disregard them)	Consistently adheres to ethical responsibilities, policies and procedures	Proactively assists others with respecting ethical responsibilities, policies and procedures	

Evidence:	**Next Steps/Suggestions:**

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8. ACCOUNTABILITY: Candidates accept responsibility and follow through on tasks.
Candidates assume responsibility for their own success and ownership of their actions. They understand the roles that others play as resources within the classroom and school. Candidates work to meet professional responsibilities regarding punctuality, preparedness, communication, and tasks.

Red flags: *Is consistently tardy; Disorganized (e.g., chronically late); Does not follow through on promises/obligations; Makes excuses instead of taking responsibility*

	Unacceptable(1)	Developing(2)	Proficient(3)	Professional(4)	Score
8a: Understands roles and responsibility and uses them effectively	Identifies roles within school community but does not recognize how/when to interact with them as resources	Understands roles and responsibilities within school community but interacts with them as resources in limited ways	Understands roles and responsibilities within school community and interacts with them as resources effectively	Viewed as a leader for making connections within the school community based on strengths and responsibilities	
8b: Proactively communicates with staff	Disregards need for communication with EPP and/or school staff through established channels	Inconsistently communicates (3 times or less) with EPP and/or school staff with lapses in pertinent and/or timely information	Proactively communicates with EPP and/or school staff (notifications, responses)	Coordinates and anticipates needs of EPP and/or school staff with communication	
8c: Consistent attendance and punctuality	Demonstrates routine absence and lateness (5 times or more)	Inconsistent attendance and punctuality (4 times or less)	Consistent attendance and punctuality	Consistent attendance and punctuality and assumes responsibility to stay late or come in early to meet the needs of the situation	
8d: Demonstrates willingness to assume responsibilities	Unreliable in taking on and/or completing tasks in a timely manner	Demonstrates willingness to assume and complete most tasks, but may need reminders or support	Demonstrates willingness to assume responsibilities and complete tasks without reminders or support	Prioritizes multiple competing demands in order to complete tasks and execute responsibilities in a timely and effective manner (takes initiative)	
8e: Takes responsibility by consistently being prepared	Demonstrates unpreparedness	Demonstrates inconsistent preparedness (unprepared 3 times or less)	Takes responsibility by consistently being prepared	Takes responsibility by being prepared and proactively anticipates next steps	

Evidence:	**Next Steps/Suggestions:**

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This disposition tool was originally developed by the faculty of the American Museum of Natural History Richard Gilder Graduate School Master of Arts (AMNH RGGS MAT) Program. It was shared with the University of Montana Western (UMW) Education Division, and was edited very slightly by its faculty, to adapt the tool to its program. The UMW Education Division introduced this tool to the Montana Council of Deans of Education group and MSU Billings decided to adopt it. It is grateful to the AMNH RGGS MAT Program and UMW Education Division for its generosity in sharing this tool. The following disposition instruments informed the original development of this tool: The University of Chicago Urban Teacher Education Program, Grand Canyon University College of Education, The Internal Medicine Milestone Project by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education and the American Board of Internal Medicine, and professional disposition rubrics from various teacher education programs (e.g., University of Southern California, Keene State College, University of South Florida); NCATE (2002), Stoddard (2006).

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Student Signature _____ date _____

Notes: describe here the feedback and improvement and when improvement should be seen.